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An International School of Peace

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED
AT THE INTERNATIONAL PEACE CONGRESS
AT LUCERNE
SEPTEMBER, 1905





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MY plea before the Peace Congress last year was for a permanent and businesslike organization for the carrying on of this peace work. If it is true that perpetual peace between the nations is the greatest blessing that can come to this world and that war is the greatest curse, and if we believe that this crusade which we have entered upon is of paramount importance, ought we to be satisfied in spending three or four days each year in convention discussing the subject, oftentimes considering comparatively unimportant matters, and then returning to our homes and doing practically nothing to advance the cause until another twelvemonth has rolled around? Should we not rather, on the very first day of the convention, lay broad plans for the coming year and make definite financial arrangements for securing the necessary people to carry out these plans?

It is true that a little something is being done each year. There are a few poorly paid secretaries, occupying out-of-the-way offices, who devote their entire time to this work; a few journals of limited influence and circulation which give prominence to the cause of peace and arbitration; but the total amount expended in this campaign the world over probably does not amount to one hundred thousand dollars a year, while the sum spent annually for military purposes is over twelve

hundred million dollars. Does not this indicate strongly the trend of public sentiment upon this question? Theoretically, the whole world is peacefully inclined, but ninety-nine per cent. of us are so lukewarm that we lend our influence to the well organized war plans. The forces that make for peace are inactive and unorganized. It is the well organized small band that overcomes the host of the unorganized. All the forces which are working for the up-building of the world, separately and ineffectively, as it were, should be united under one great, well organized band. We need a small army of consecrated men and women, thoroughly devoted to the work, engaging in it not for the sake of the salary, but because of their deep interest in it, and it is our duty to see that the means are furnished to enable such as these to devote their entire lives to it.

While arbitration is the greatest factor working for peace in modern times, we must not forget the fundamental influences that make it necessary so often to resort to arbitration. This is the age of physical force. It dominates the world. The nations bow down before it. Japan was not admitted as a power of the first rank because of her intellectual and artistic attainments. It was not until she had proved her skill in the use of arms that she was accorded the proud place she now occupies. The athlete in our schools and colleges is preferred to the scholar who leads his class. Is there not something inherent in these views pervading the world that arbitration cannot cure?

This work is of such a character that it deserves the earnest study and coöperation of the best men of all nations. What can we do to make our efforts more effective?

Naturally, perhaps, my thoughts turn toward the educational side of the question, and the greatest educational forces are the schools, the press and the pulpit. We should begin with

the schools. Every book put into the hands of the children should be carefully examined and everything in it that would tend to encourage unduly the martial spirit should be carefully weeded out. Unfortunately, a large portion of the best literature of the day breathes too much of this martial spirit. In the early times nearly everything was military. It was a life-and-death struggle, with war everywhere, and literature was based largely on conquests and warlike deeds. We should teach our little ones that self-sacrifice is no longer incident to the battle-field alone. The heroes and heroines of to-day are all about us in the peaceful walks of life. The noblest are often unheralded and rarely come to public notice.

The press is one of the greatest influences in the state to-day. It is of the utmost importance that its tone upon this momentous question should be raised to the highest level. At one time it seemed to me that an ably edited journal, with a sufficient fund at its disposal, devoted exclusively to peace and arbitration, would perhaps be the most effective instrument in our crusade; but the more I study the problem, the stronger is my conviction that a special journal of this kind would not be so potent for good as a Bureau of Information, properly organized and conducted, which should furnish important articles to the leading papers. Comparatively few people would be interested in any journal devoted entirely to this subject; but the millions will read a well written article in the daily press. People desire information; and I am satisfied that the most important service to our cause could be rendered, not through any one organ, even were it the best in the world, but through the great body of kindly disposed newspapers, the Bureau supplying, judiciously, such material as would best serve our ends. There should be in every community a very able editor, in close touch with the leading papers and writers

of the day, whose duty it should be to gather and distribute this material.

The clergy need to be awakened in much fuller measure to their responsibilities for existing conditions. We should secure some of the ablest representatives of the pulpit and make it possible for them to devote the rest of their lives to going among and corresponding with their brother ministers, arousing enthusiasm in this great cause.

This work of education needs to be carried on systematically and continuously, and I have thought that it might be well to establish a "School of Peace," with a Board of Trustees selected from those who have shown great originality and executive ability in carrying on large business enterprises. To their hands should be committed the duty of choosing the ablest men in the country who desire to devote their lives to the study and promotion of this most important of all questions. They should carefully consider the conditions of the whole world and the relation of each nation to it, in order to inaugurate a working scheme that shall be just to all. They should also be competent to select the most efficient assistants to join them in this great undertaking.

To establish and equip this "School of Peace" on broad and lasting foundations a large endowment is necessary.

With this educational work in mind there has been established in Boston a library of "peace books." This library now consists of Bloch's "Future of War," Sumner's "Addresses on War," Channing's "Discourses on War," Tolstoi's "Be-think Yourselves!" Warner's "Ethics of Force," Bridgman's "World Organization," Dodge's "War Inconsistent with the Religion of Jesus Christ," and we have in press Walsh's "The Moral Damage of War."

Although these books have been fully and favorably re-

viewed by the press, extensively advertised by means of thousands of circulars and gift copies scattered all over the land, and the price put upon them extremely low, they are not being read as we could wish. It is my belief that the special advocate, imbued with the spirit of the old crusaders, must prepare the way for the written word.

We need men and women with the spirit of a Luther, a Savonarola, a St. Francis, a Florence Nightingale and a Godfrey to give their whole lives to the work. If we could have but ten such in each country, this apathy would soon be changed into active opposition to this war spirit. Can we not take such steps as will secure the active coöperation of the business men of the world? We need constant and permanent work along business lines, such as men of affairs can best render, if we would limit armaments and bring the nations together to discuss international relations. Such a parliament in time would enable them to settle conflicting interests without war. It would bring confidence to the nations, that each could safely rely upon the united action of all. Under such conditions, with all these educational influences at work, the Nations in time would be drawn closer together, and at no distant day the armies and navies would become only a police force for the peace of the world.

EDWIN GINN.

